

Welcome to the Rockport Council on Aging Senior Center

Summary

This document defines eligibility criteria and standards of behavior for adults, aged 60 and older who wish to participate in activities and services at the Rockport Senior Center. The registration and sign-in process is described as well as the range of services available. Finally, this document offers explanations on how staff attempt to resolve concerns or conflicts that occur in the course of operating the senior center.

I. WHO WE ARE:

The Council on Aging is a nine-eleven member advisory board appointed by the Selectmen and accountable to them and the Town Administrator who assess the needs and interests of older adults, aged 60 and older in the Rockport community and advise on program and policies pertinent to seniors living in Rockport.

The Rockport Senior Center is the Town of Rockport's vibrant hub for programs, activities, and services primarily designed for independent adults, aged 60 and older.

Senior Center Staff are professionally trained and qualified to coordinate services and programs and to assess the independence level of participants.

II. SCOPE OF SERVICES:

SERVICES PROVIDED:

Exercise classes, lectures, creative arts, health information, volunteer opportunities, games, day trips, and a variety of other wellness programs are available. Staff offers social services to seniors and their families, with referrals and information. Volunteer opportunities are available to assist and support daily operations and program activities. We serve as a congregate meal site with Seniorcare, Inc. and are a Meals on Wheels delivery hub to homebound residents. A bi-monthly newsletter, *News on Broadway* provides up to date information on all of the activities and events planned. Some activities are offered free of charge and others will require a fee in order to participate.

SERVICES NOT PROVIDED:

The Rockport Senior Center is not an adult day health center and does not provide nursing care, adult day care programs, respite care, homemaker services, mental health services, memory care, overnight care or other assisted living services. Staff employed by the Center, stand ready to refer those needing such assistance to community resources which may better serve their needs. The Senior Center does not employ staff to manage the health, mental health or personal care needs of participants. Staff is not authorized to provide hands on, personal care assistance, including help with toileting or medication management.

III. DEFINITIONS/ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE

Eligibility to participate – each participant must be an age eligible (60 years and older), independent senior and possess the ability and willingness to follow all guidelines as stated herein. Adult guests under the age of 60 years, when accompanied by an eligible participant are allowed to participate as space and situation deem appropriate. Child guests are welcome when intergenerational activities are offered. A senior who is not independent may attend if accompanied by a caregiver, family member or friend. Eligibility decisions are at the sole discretion of the Senior Center management.

Independent Senior – An independent senior is expected to be reasonably oriented, capable of independent decision making, and also capable of planning their own activities including financial transactions, making reservations for lunch and following Senior Center guidelines. Independent seniors are responsible for their personal health, hygiene, and medical care, including medication management and monitoring of special diets. Independent seniors come and go at their own free will and do not require more than the customary assistance provided by staff to participate in activities. Staff at the Senior Center use the definition above to determine whether or not an individual meets eligibility. These decisions are at the sole discretion of the Senior Center management.

Visitors from Assisted Living, Group Homes and Supported Environments – Arrangements for groups of seniors from settings such as assisted living or supportive housing to participate must be made in advance with Senior Center management staff. An appropriate staff to group size ratio will be enforced with at least two staff present for all such group visits.

IV. GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION

In order to maintain a safe, fair and pleasant environment, the Council on Aging has adopted a policy by which all participants must meet eligibility requirements defined above and also follow the basic guidelines as stated:

1. **Registration/Emergency Contact/Release of Information Form** - All newcomers must complete a Registration and Release Form upon attending for the first time. The form asks registrants to voluntarily include medical conditions and the name and telephone number of an emergency contact. Please remember to update your form with us, if any changes to the information provided should occur.
2. **Personal Conduct, Respect for Others and the Physical Plant** – Participants are expected not to cause disturbances to Senior Center programming and be respectful of other participants and staff. The Senior Center building and its furnishings are assets and should be respected as such by all participants. If inappropriate actions are reported or witnessed, Senior Center management staff will use their discretion to take corrective action to resolve.
3. **Personal Care and Hygiene** – Participants are responsible for managing their own health care including personal hygiene, toileting, continence, feeding, medication management and monitoring

of special dietary needs. Senior Center staff will address hygiene concerns with individual participants as they occur or are reported.

4. **Illness/Taking Ill** – Participants who attend while ill with colds, coughs, or flus that could be spread to others will be asked to leave and not return until they have recovered. A doctor's note stating that you are in good health and able to participate independently may be required before return for those experiencing and extended illness. If a participant takes an ill turn, experiences a fall, or other accident while in attendance, 911 Emergency Response will be called for assessment and assistance and family or emergency contact will be notified.
5. **Sportsmanship** – Good sportsmanship is expected in the play of all games. All games offered are considered non-competitive and social. Gambling is not allowed in any municipal building and bets shall not be offered. Social Bingo games are permitted through the Massachusetts State Lottery Commission.
6. **Parking** – Participants who drive to the Center may park in the lot, on the street spaces, and the spaces reserved for Senior Center parking on Main Street. Handicap spots are for those with placards indicating a handicapping condition.
7. **Prohibitions** –Smoking/, drinking, and substance abuse are prohibited. The participant may be asked to abstain from the inappropriate behavior, or, if necessary staff may contact police, doctor, ambulance, or an emergency contact for response and assistance. Those unable to abide will face suspension or exclusion from the Senior Center.
8. **Children and Pets** – Children are allowed to participate in the intergenerational activities offered but are not allowed to attend or participate in activities and events meant for senior participants. Pets are not allowed with the exception of registered, certified service dogs.
9. **Bullying or Threats** – Any individual utilizing threats and/or exhibiting bullying behaviors will be asked to leave the building. Name calling, intimidation, and other forms of intimidation are prohibited. Police may be called and a possible permanent suspension from the Senior Center may result.
10. **Reasonable Accommodations** – The COA provides reasonable accommodations within the scope of its mission and resources. Senior Center staff use their professional training and discretion to handle such requests for accommodations. Individuals seeking an accommodation should meet with the Senior Center Director to discuss needs and available resources.

V. EXPECTATIONS FOR PERSONAL CONDUCT

Be kind to others – Please demonstrate kindness to other participants and staff. Gossip, speculation, unkind words or actions are hurtful. Bullying behaviors are prohibited.

Cell Phone Use – Please refrain from talking on your cell phone in the Senior Center halls and activity areas. If you must use your phone, please step outside or to your car.

Dress Code – Proper attire including shirt and shoes are required.

Seating – There is no reserved seating at Senior Center activities unless specified. Please do not ask someone to move, if they are already sitting in your “favorite” seat, as that seat is not reserved for you.

Sleeping – Sleeping on the premises is not permitted.

Tolerance of Others – Offensive statements regarding age, sex, gender identity, race, ethnicity, religion or life style will not be tolerated.

VI. RESOLUTION OF CONFLICTS:

If a participant in any program or activity witnesses or is involved in an interpersonal conflict or feels threatened in anyway, the participant should report the incident to a staff member. Staff will attempt to gather information about the complaint or concern, and make every effort to resolve the concern. Staff are required to submit an Incident Report Form to the Director. Staff may also exercise a variety of sanctions in an effort to resolve a conflict and those involved may expect one or more of the following action.

- Ask the participant to abstain from the inappropriate behavior
- Ask participant to leave the premises for the day
- Issue a verbal or written warning
- Suspend a participant from the Senior Center for a certain time period
- Bar the participant from return to the center
- Discontinue the activity that is creating the conflict for a certain time frame
- Make a decision favoring one individual over another
- Call the police for assistance and possible charges
- Call emergency responders, medical personnel or emergency contact to discuss the incident.

ABUSE OF RULES

Violation of the guidelines including abusive language, threats, intimidation of others, obscene gestures, raised voices, bullying, abuse/damage of equipment/facilities, may result in the suspension or barring from further use of the Senior Center. If a participant cannot reasonably comply with these guidelines, staff are available to share resources and discuss options.

CHANGE IN HEALTH STATUS

Participants who experience a change in health status resulting in their no longer being able to attend programs independently may be required to be accompanied by a companion or be advised that attendance at the Center is no longer viable. If a patron experiences a physical or mental health episode, but is otherwise capable of conforming their conduct to these standards, then reasonable accommodation requests will be considered. If a participant cannot meet the required standards, staff is available to share resources and discuss other options.

**Older Americans Act (OAA) nutrition services may be provided to a spouse who is less than sixty years of age, based on OAA regulations. Transportation is available to those under 60 years old with a documented disability. Senior Center staff will consider requests of those younger than 60 to participate as circumstance and space allow.*

The Rockport Council on Aging & Rockport Senior Center at 58 Broadway, Rockport, MA 01966 reserves the right to adapt or change these rules as necessary. Standards are adapted from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

I have received the Rockport Senior Center Participation Policy on _____20____. I have read the above rules and regulations and agree to comply with all requirements set forth, as well as, the requests of the Senior Center staff.

Signature

Print Name